

unit,  $f_3$  is the focal length of the third unit,  $v_{3n}$  is the Abbe number of the material for the negative lens of the third unit, and  $N_{3n}$  is the refractive index.

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please replace claims 1, 9, 11, and 16 with the following:

1. (Amended) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side:

a first lens unit of a negative optical power, said first lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position closest to the object side in the zoom lens;

a second lens unit of a positive optical power, said second lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position following the first lens unit in order from the object side; and

a third lens unit of a positive optical power, said third lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position following the second lens unit in order from the object side, said third lens unit having a cemented lens formed by cementing a positive lens element to a negative lens element and moving along an optical axis for zooming,

wherein a space between said first and second lens units decreases, and a space between said second lens unit and said third lens unit increases in zooming from a wide angle end to a telephoto end, and

letting  $N_{Li}$  be the number of lens elements constituting an  $i$ th lens unit, a condition defined by

$$NL_3 < NL_2 \leq NL_1$$

is satisfied.

9. (Amended) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side:  
a first lens unit of a negative optical power;  
a second lens unit of a positive optical power; and  
a third lens unit of a positive optical power, said third lens unit having a cemented lens formed by cementing a positive lens element to a negative lens element and moving along an optical axis for zooming,

wherein a space between said first and second lens units decreases, and a space between said second lens unit and said third lens unit increases in zooming from a wide angle end to a telephoto end, and

letting  $NLi$  be the number of lens elements constituting an  $i$ th lens unit, a condition defined by

$$NL3 < NL2 \leq NL1$$

is satisfied; and

wherein said third lens unit moves along a convex locus to the image side in zooming from the wide angle end to the telephoto end.

11. (Amended) A zoom lens according to claim 1, wherein letting  $f3n$  be a focal length of the negative lens element of the cemented lens of said third lens unit,  $f3$  be a focal length of said third lens unit,  $v3n$  be an Abbe number of the negative lens element of the cemented lens of said third lens unit, and  $N3n$  be a refractive index of the negative lens element of the cemented lens of said third lens unit, conditional expressions,

$$0.8 < |f_{3n}/f_3| < 1.7$$

$$v_{3n} < 40$$

$$1.7 < N_{3n}$$

are satisfied.

16. (Amended) A zoom according to claim 1, wherein

said second lens unit has, in order from the object side to the image side a cemented lens formed by cementing a positive lens element to a negative lens element and a positive lens element in a biconvex shape surfaces, and

letting  $R_a$  be a radius of curvature of a lens surface of the cemented lens of said second lens unit which is located nearest to the object side,  $R_b$  be a radius of curvature of a lens surface of the cemented lens of said second lens unit which is located nearest to an image side,  $R_c$  be a radius of curvature of a lens surface of said positive lens element in a biconvex shape which is located on the object side,  $R_d$  be a radius of curvature of a lens surface of said positive lens element in the biconvex shape which is located on the image side,  $d$  be a thickness of the cemented lens of said second lens unit on the optical axis,  $f_w$  be a focal length of an overall system at a wide angel end,  $f_{3n}$  be a focal length of the negative lens element of the cemented lens of said third lens unit,  $f_3$  be a focal length of said third lens unit,  $v_{3n}$  be an Abbe number of the negative lens element of the cemented lens of said third lens unit, and  $N_{3n}$  be a refractive index, conditional expressions,

$$0.7 < R_b/R_a < 1.2$$

$$-0.6 < (R_d + R_c)/(R_d - R_c) < 0.6$$

$$0.3 < d/fw < 0.5$$

$$0.8 < |f_{3n}/f_3| < 1.7$$

$$v_{3n} < 40$$

$$1.7 < N_{3n}$$

are satisfied.--.

Please add new claims 21-25 as follows:

21. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side:

a first lens unit of a negative optical power, said first lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position closest to the object side in the zoom lens;

a second lens unit of a positive optical power, said second lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position following the first lens unit in order from the object side, said second lens unit having a cemented lens; and

a third lens unit of a positive optical power, said third lens unit being a lens unit in order from the object side, said third lens unit moving along an optical axis for zooming,

wherein a space between said first and second lens unit decreases, and a space between said second lens unit and said third lens unit increases in zooming from a wide angle end to a telephoto end, and

letting  $N_{Li}$  be the number of lens elements constituting an  $i$ th lens unit, a conditional expressions,

$$NL3 < NL2 \leq NL1$$

$$NL2 = 3$$

are satisfied.

22. (New) A zoom lens comprising, in order from an object side to an image side:

a first lens unit of a negative optical power, said first lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position closest to the object side in the zoom lens;

a second lens unit of a positive optical power; said second lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position following the first lens unit in order from the object side, said second lens unit having a cemented lens formed by cementing a positive lens element to a negative lens element, a thickness of the positive lens element constituting the cemented lens <sup>being</sup> ~~being~~ greater than a thickness of the negative lens element; and

a third lens unit of a positive optical power, said third lens unit being a lens unit disposed at a position following the second lens unit in order from the object side, said third lens unit moving along an optical axis for zooming,

wherein a space between said first and second lens unit decreases, and a space between said second lens unit and said third lens unit increases in zooming from a wide angle end to a telephoto end, and

letting  $NL_i$  be the number of lens elements constituting an  $i$ th lens unit, a condition defined by

$$NL3 < NL2 \leq NL1$$

is satisfied.

23. (New) An image taking apparatus comprising:

a photoelectric conversion element; and

an image taking lens for forming an image of an object on a photosensitive surface of the photoelectric conversion element, said image taking lens comprising said zoom lens defined in claim 21.

24. (New) An image taking apparatus comprising:

a photoelectric conversion element; and

an image taking lens for forming an image of an object on a photosensitive surface of the photoelectric conversion element, said image taking lens comprising said zoom lens defined in claim 22.

25. (New) An image taking apparatus comprising:

a photoelectric conversion element; and

an image taking lens for forming an image of an object on a photosensitive surface of the photoelectric conversion element, said image taking lens comprising said zoom lens defined in claim 24.